

## **Waste**

### **Enhance Recycling and Waste Diversion Opportunities and Services**

#### **Target(s):**

**Continue to ensure 100% of residents and businesses in Lincoln have access to convenient, efficient, and affordable recycling and waste diversion services.**

#### **Lincoln Now:**

The City of Lincoln considers residential and commercial solid waste services to be like any other utility, and recycling and waste diversion is central to the city's solid waste management system.

Although it is preferred that people reduce the amount of materials purchased and discarded, or reuse the items already in existence, recycling is very important for the conservation of natural resources, for energy reduction, and to limit the use of land for disposal of wastes. Both waste that is presently allowed in the landfill as well as that banned by state law may be recycled. State law bans certain materials from landfill disposal, including used oil, waste tires, spent lead acid batteries, discarded household appliances such as washers, dryers, refrigerators, ranges, dishwashers, etc., and grass and leaves (from April 1<sup>st</sup> - November 30<sup>th</sup>).

Three options are available for local residents to recycle materials or divert waste from landfill disposal: 1) subscribe to yard waste collection through a private hauler or compost organic materials in the "backyard"; 2) transport traditional recyclable materials (paper, cardboard, plastic, glass, aluminum, steel) to a multi-material recycling drop-off site; or, 3) subscribe to curbside recycling provided by the private sector.

The City of Lincoln's yard waste composting facility processed 19,493 tons of grass, leaves and wood waste in FY 2010-2011. The finished compost is available to residents and is an excellent soil amendment for gardens and lawns. A total of 6,022 tons of traditional recyclables were collected in FY 2010-2011 through the network of 33 recycling drop-off locations established for Lincoln and Lancaster County residents by the City of Lincoln.

The annual survey conducted by the recycling office suggests that local, privately operated curbside recyclers served about 18,000 households in Lancaster County and collected 9,470 tons of recyclables in 2011. The data gathered from this survey suggests approximately 20% of Lancaster County households (single family through four-plex units) subscribe to curbside recycling. To obtain a more detailed picture of recycling in Lincoln, the community survey to be conducted as part of the current Solid Waste Management Plan process will include questions regarding residential recycling.